

Message Text

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43

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 AGR-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 FRB-02 H-02 INR-10 INT-08 L-03 LAB-06 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 AID-20 CIEP-02 SS-14 STR-08

TAR-02 TRSE-00 USIA-12 PRS-01 OMB-01 OIC-04 ARA-11

EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10 IO-12 RSR-01 /223 W

----- 075139

R 311409 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1339

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ETRD, TS

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN POSITION ON REVERSE PREFERENCES
AND UPCOMING GATT SESSION

REF: STATE 000638

1. I CALLED ON MINISTER OF ECONOMY, CHEDLI AYARI, MARCH 30, FOR PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING WITH HIM UPCOMING GATT SESSION SCHEDULED FOR FALL OF THIS YEAR. I HAD PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED MATTER WITH FONOFF SECGEN MOHMOUD MESTIRI FEB 23. I STRESSED TO AYARI IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO FORTHCOMING GATT NEGOTIATIONS AND REVIEWED WITH HIM FOUR- POINT STRATEGY WE HAVE INITALLY DEVELOPED. I REFERRED TO PRESIDENT NIXON'S REPORT TO CONGRESS ON USG INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICY. I SAID IN THE COURSE OF COMING WEEKS USG WOULD WELCOME OPPORTUNITY EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH TUNISIA REGARDING VARIOUS ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED AT GATT SESSION AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT TUNISIA WOULD AGREE WITH OUR STRATEGY.

2. AYARI WELCOMED PROSPECT OF EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THIS
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SUBJECT, AND SAID THAT TUNISIA BASICALLY AGREES WITH OUR STRATEGY -- ADHERING TO THE LONG- RANGE PRINCIPLE OF FREE TRADE, ELIMINATION OF TARIFFS, ETC. AT SAME TIME TUNISIA HAS CERTAIN PROBLEMS THAT MAY MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR HER TO ADHERE TO SUCH STRATEGY IN NEAR FUTURE. HE CITED CASE OF COMPETITIVE US- TUNISIAN CITRUS EXPORTS TO EEC. HE SAID DOLLAR DEVALUATION HAS PUT USG CITRUS EXPORTS IN ADVANTAGEIOUS POSITION RE EEC AND, THEREFORE, TUNISIA WOULD NOT OBJECT TO SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS WHICH FAVORED TUNISIAN EXPORTS IN THIS MARKET.

3. IN THIS CONNECTION HE REITERATED TUNISIA' S OPPOSITION TO PRINCIPLE OF REVERSE PREFERENCES AND SAID THAT TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR KHELIL HAD RECENTLY HAD USEFUL DISCUSSION THIS SUBJECT WITH OUR AMBASSADOR TO THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES IN BRUSSELS. TUNISIA WOULD PREFER TO AVOID REVERSE PREFERENCES IN ITS TRADE RELATIONS WITH EEC BUT IF THIS ONLY WAY IT CAN ACHIEVE EFFECTIVE ACCESS TO EEC MARKET, IT MIGHT HAVE TO GO ALONG.
SEELYE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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